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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7325
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4395
RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 5768
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ 4970
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 5909
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2026
RUEHGE/AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN 1155
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 3236
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 6577
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 3495
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO 0164
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 0313
RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 0129
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINGSTON 0090
RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA 0107
RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 0146
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 0271
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 0515
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 0182
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0019
RUEHOR/AMEMBASSY GABORONE 0015
RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE 0019
RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA 0001
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0022
RUEHUP/AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST 0009
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 0010
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 0019
RUEHRI/AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO 3309
RUEHSO/AMCONSUL SAO PAULO 8573
RUEHRG/AMCONSUL RECIFE 5832
RUEAEPA/HQ EPA WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEBAAA/DOE WASHDC
RUEHC/DOI WASHDC
RUEAWJA/DOJ WASHDC
RUEANAT/NASA HQ WASHDC
RUCPDC/NOAA WASHDC
RUMIAAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL
RUEHRC/USDA WASHDC
RUCPDO/USDOC WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 BRASILIA 002378

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS USAID TO LAC/RSD, LAC/SAM, G/ENV, PPC/ENV
USDA FOR FOREST SERVICE: L MAHEW
INTERIOR FOR DIR INT AFFAIRS: K WASHBURN
INTERIOR FOR FWS: M RATCHFORD
INTERIOR PASS USGS FOR INTERNATIONAL: J WEAVER
Add National Parks Service here if possible
JUSTICE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES: J WEBB
EPA FOR INTERNATIONAL: C HILL-MACON
NSF FOR INTERNATIONAL: H STOLBERG

E.O.: N/A

TAGS: [OTRA](#) [XM](#) [XL](#) [BR](#)

SUBJECT: BRASILIA HUB HOSTS 2006 CONFERENCE OF WESTERN HEMISPHERE
ESTH OFFICERS AT FOZ DO IGUAU

Reftel BRASILIA 2048

SUMMARY

1. The September 13-16 Western Hemisphere Environment, Science, Technology and Health Officers Conference (ESTHOC) in Foz do Iguazu, Brazil was by all accounts a great success. Forty-six people representing US embassies in nineteen Latin American countries as

well as USG entities USGS, EPA, USAID, ONR/DOD, DOJ, DOS/OES, DOS/Public Affairs, DOS/NAS, and DOS/INR took part in ESTHOC. The two-and-a-half-day event covered ESTH issues of current concern in the Western Hemisphere including: Energy, Climate Change, S&T Cooperation, Avian Influenza, General Health Issues, Trade and Environment, Wildlife Trafficking, Forests, Biodiversity, Fisheries, the White Water to Blue Water partnership, and the impact of the Department's Strategic Framework and Foreign Assistance reform efforts on the role of ESTH Officers and on future funding for ESTH programs. This was an excellent opportunity to exchange information between and among USG agencies, different offices in the Department of State, and ESTH officers at posts in the region. The conference generated renewed energy for actively advancing ESTH issues as a key contribution to the Secretary's vision of transformational diplomacy, new partnerships developed among ESTHOffs, OES and WHA officers, other agencies, and a percolation of new ideas on areas for future cooperation. End Summary.

12. During the first two days of the conference, experts on issues ranging from national parks to the Methanes to Markets partnership made presentations and were able to bring the assembled ESTH officers up to speed on these topics. These experts, from the Department of State and other USG agencies, used this time to explain the role of each agency and DOS office in handling ESTH issues in the region as well as outlining current programs and projects and areas for future cooperation. Of particular utility in an atmosphere of shrinking budgets were the presentations made by offices, bureaus, and agencies that illustrated ways to leverage existing funding, programs, and partnerships to increase our ESTH

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cooperation with national governments without needing additional financial resources.

13. Each ESTH officer also had an opportunity to share with the group the most important and germane ESTH issues for the country in which they are posted. This feedback was beneficial not only to the assembled group in showing that many of these issues such as environmental law enforcement and governance are nearly universal, but in also illustrating to the OES bureau what the posts see as the top ESTH priorities in each country. This discussion was then taken into break-out groups to look for areas of convergence. (Note: Due to the nature of the countries represented, we attempted to separate them into subgroups based on the likelihood of having issues in common with each other and not strictly based on the definition of who is or is not part of the CAFTA-DR Free Trade Agreement for example. End Note.) These break-out groups were: Andean countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Chile, Peru, Venezuela, and Bolivia), CAFTA-DR countries (Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guyana, Jamaica, and Panama), and Southern Cone countries (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia) as well as a final group for the Washington perspective.

ANDEAN COUNTRIES

13. This group highlighted the role of Public Affairs as an important tool for promoting ESTH issues in the region. They suggested a campaign on genetic piracy (and research), a Voluntary Visitors program on forestry/national parks, an 'American corner' focused on the environment (drawing on work currently taking place in Chile), and a PAS FSN designated for environmental issues. They also agreed on the need to increase coordination with NGOs and learn about what other USG agencies are doing in each country. On Indigenous issues, the group suggested a workshop on ecotourism (capacity-building) and a regional event on forestry in coordination with the USFS. Other regional/cross-border issues of importance in the region are pipelines and environmental safety (with the private sector), disaster monitoring, and drugs and the environment. This

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group stated that a (topical) list of websites where to get grants/funding would be a great tool to help them reach some of

their goals.

CAFTA-DR

¶4. The CAFTA-DR group agreed that energy is currently a main issue in the region. The main focus of energy being on electrical generation, the production of ethanol, the need for information on what ethanol price structures are (e.g. costs to convert buses for biodiesel), and energy conservation programs such as the Green Embassies Program and Energy Star. The group stated that, in the region posts need to focus on small projects that work and have results. As for Information Sharing, the group suggests using the consular waiting room, DVC programs, and learning more about what experts can be either brought to the region or by DVC. Interestingly, the group also focused on USAID Cooperation and stated that, "We can do better in learning what AID is doing in each country and how to leverage their programs."

SOUTHERN CONE

¶5. For the Southern Cone group, the use of DOJ's Op-Dat funds to run small-scale (regional, national or local) environmental law enforcement courses was suggested. Topics for the Southern Cone include: illegal logging, legal reserves, and trafficking in animals. Also, Technical Assistance to National Parks in Uruguay/Paraguay was mentioned as a potentially productive area. As Uruguay's National Park System is in its fledgling stages, a group IV/VV to bring together the nations various implementing agencies would achieve excellent results. On the topic of TFCA, both Paraguay and Uruguay offered viable options for a debt-for-nature-swap and could work together to coordinate activities toward that end. The group agreed that Southern Cone countries, especially Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay are ripe for

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regional conferences and speakers due to their close proximity and the ease of travel between them. Again logging, agricultural expansion, natural reserves, cross-border watersheds and biofuels were topics common to all of the Southern Cone Countries.

¶6. Biofuels in the Southern Cone was a topic of prolonged discussion. All of the Southern Cone Countries are potential epicenters for biofuels (both ethanol - cane or cellulosic - and biodiesel). Two competing interests that need to be guided in this process are socio-economic development and agribusiness via the production of fuel stocks and conservation of existing biomes at risk from monoculture/agricultural encroachment. A regional conference, similar in vein to the recent Sustainable Soy conference in Paraguay (BRASILIA 2048) could provide these countries with best practices, development models, potential impacts, etc.

Comment

¶7. Comment. The meeting proved to be fruitful and stimulated discussion along with immediate actions. The South America HUB is currently working on a new Intranet site, which will integrate information from all South America ESTH posts into one central site; embassy officials from several countries (i.e. Southern Cone countries) discussed working with their Public Affairs sections to bring a speaker down from the US National Parks Service to discuss concessions inside national parks; several other posts including Bolivia resolved to speak with their NAS colleagues to see about duplicating the success story on NAS collaboration with wildlife trafficking conducted in Brazil with the Science section; and all of the participants left energized on these issues and looking for other opportunities to collaborate with their host governments on ESTH issues.

¶8. Post thanks the OES Bureau for their support of this conference and continued support to the Hub program and individual ESTH

officers in the region. With the end of the OES-I program, the need for increased coordination and cooperation between and among all USG

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agencies and OES bureaus involved with ESTH issues will be of increasing importance. The Hub team looks forward to continuing and building upon the entrepreneurial spirit shown at this regional conference in fulfilling our regional mandate, supporting the bilateral missions, and advocating for US ESTH foreign policy.

19. The Brasilia Hub also stands ready to consult with other Environmental Hub Offices to share ideas and lessons from the organization of this ESTHOC to help ensure the success of similar ETHOCs planned for FY 2007 in East Asia and Pacific (February), South Central Asia (May) and Africa (September). End Comment.

SOBEL